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The Men Who Lead Socialist Unity Party

The Fifth Congress of the Socialist Unity Party concluded in Berlin on July 16th with the election of the new Central Committee, which decides party policy until the next congress. The slate of 111 full members of the committee and 44 candidate members was unanimously approved by the delegates to the congress.

Immediately after the election, the new Central Committee met and unanimously selected Walter Ulbricht to continue in the post of First Secretary of the Central Committee. A new Politburo was also elected. Its members are as follows:

Friedrich Ebert, 64-year-old printer, son of the Social Democratic veteran of the same name who was first president of the German Republic constituted in 1918. He was Social Democratic member of the Reichstag from 1928 till 1933, and spent several years in a nazi concentration camp. He is today Lord Mayor of the Democratic Sector of Berlin.

Otto Grotewohl, 64-year-old printer. During the Weimar Republic he played a leading role in the Social Democratic Party, and was member of the Reichstag 1925—33. During the nazi period he served two jail terms. After the war he was chairman of East German Social Democratic Party until it merged with Communist Party to form Socialist Unity Party in 1946. Prime Minister of the German Democratic Republic since 1949.

Erich Honecker, 46-year-old tiler. Communist youth leader before Hitler came to power, and spent ten years in jail under the nazis. After the war was for many years chairman of the Free German Youth.

Bruno Leuschner, 48-year-old salesman. Pre-Hitler member of the Communist Party, and spent nine years in nazi concentration camps. Today key industrial planner as Chairman of the State Planning Commission.

Hermann Matern, 65-year-old worker. Member of the Communist Party since 1919. Arrested by nazis in 1933, but escaped to Soviet Union, where he spent war years. Today Deputy Chairman of the People's Chamber.

Erich Mueckenberger, 48-year-old metal worker. Joined Social Democratic Party 1927, served two jail terms under nazis.

Alfred Neumann, 49-year-old carpenter. Active in working class movement since 1928, fought in International Brigade in Spain.

Albert Norden, 53-year-old wood worker. Joined Communist Party in 1920. Spent nazi period in emigration in various European countries and USA, where he published "Germany Today". Secretary of Central Committee, Socialist Unity Party, since 1955.

Wilhelm Pieck, 83-year-old carpenter, active in working class politics since 1895 when he joined Social Democratic Party. Jailed for opposition to First World War. Member of Communist Party Central Committee since 1919, member of Reichstag from 1928 bis 1933. Led Communist Party from emigration in France and Soviet Union during Hitler period. President of the German Democratic Republic since 1949.

Heinrich Rau, 59-year-old metal worker. Member of Communist Party since 1919. Commanded 11th International Brigade in Spain, subsequently three years in nazi concentration camp. Today Minister for Foreign Trade.

Willi Stoph, 44-year-old builder. Member of Communist Party since 1931. Today Minister of Defence.

Walter Ulbricht, 65-year-old carpenter. Member of Communist Party since 1919, member of Reichstag 1928—33. Spent nazi period as political emigrant mainly in the Soviet Union, where he helped organise Free German movement. Today First Deputy Prime Minister.

Herbert Warnke, 56-year-old shipbuilder. Joined Communist Party in 1923. During war interned in Sweden because of anti-fascist activity. Today Chairman of Free German Trade Union Federation.

CONGRESS RESOLUTION

Here are some of the main points from the resolution unanimously adopted by the Congress of the Socialist Unity Party:

1. International Tasks

"The maintenance of peace, the construction of socialism and the national re-birth of Germany as a peace-loving democratic state demand a further strengthening of the international position of the German Democratic Republic. Above all the fraternal relations with the Soviet Union and the other states of the socialist camp must be steadily consolidated and extended in the spirit of socialist internationalism.

"The struggle against the atomic-armament plans of German militarism also serves the cause of national reunification . . .

"The Socialist Unity Party regards support for national independence movements, and the struggle of

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formerly oppressed peoples for the maintenance of their independence as an important international task.

"The Socialist Unity Party stands for the development of normal relations between the German Democratic Republic and all other countries which are ready to open such relations on the basis of equality, respect for sovereignty, and non-interference in internal affairs."

2. Building Socialism

This section of the resolution sketches at some length the developments in East Germany since 1945, stating:

"In the years 1945—49 the tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution were solved under the leadership of the working class and its party. The completion of the bourgeois democratic revolution coincided with the removal of the basis of imperialism, and the growth of the first elements of socialism.

"After the formation of the West German separatist state (in 1949), the people of East Germany, united in the National Front of Democratic Germany, founded the German Democratic Republic, in order to make impossible, once and for all, a grab on the part of German militarism at our part of Germany. With the development of the workers' and peasants' power, a form of proletarian dictatorship, there came the transition to the second stage of the revolution. In 1952 we began with the planned construction of the basis of socialism."

The resolution then quoted figures showing that nearly 89% of industrial production now came from socialised factories (1950: 76.5%), and 32.7% of farming land was now in the socialist sector (1950: 5.7%).

"The social-economic structure of the German Democratic Republic shows that the bases of socialism have now, by and large, been created."

3. The Workers' and Peasants' State

"The German Democratic Republic is the legal sovereign German state. In the German Democratic Republic, in the spirit of the Potsdam Agreement, the lessons have been drawn from the Second World War, the roots of fascism have been removed, and the basis has been provided for peaceful development . . .

"Berlin is the capital of the German Democratic Republic. One part of the capital, West Berlin, is today still misused as a cold war base, and for espionage and sabotage directed against the German Democratic Republic and other countries of the socialist camp. The task is to end this unnatural state of affairs, to normalise conditions in Berlin, and to turn the whole city into a city of peace and progress. In Berlin there must be a decisive struggle against the American way of life and against the decadence which has found a place in certain circles in West Berlin . . .

"Our workers' and peasants' power is socialist democracy, that is to say democracy for the million-strong masses of the people . . . Socialist democracy develops on the basis of the growth of socialist property and the stabilisation of the socialist economic system, and with the growing consciousness and activity of the workers guided and organised by the socialist state towards the solution of the tasks in the state and the economy. Democracy is never an end to itself. Bourgeois democracy serves capitalist class domination, and socialist democracy serves the stabilisation of the people's democratic order and the construction of socialism . . .

"In the German Democratic Republic the basis of the class struggle is the struggle against the class enemy in West Berlin and West Germany who is doing everything to hinder the great work of construction in the German Democratic Republic. Inside the German Democratic Republic too there are internal causes of class struggle, rooted in the capitalist private property which still exists, and in capitalist influences from the west. Parts of the capitalist circles and former active fascists have not learned the lessons of the past, and a certain number of citizens of the German Democratic Republic cling to the ideology of the capitalist class of West Germany . . .

"During the transitional period the activity of the state power of the people's democracy is very complicated, particularly in view of the existence of two German states. The task of guarding state power must be reconciled as far as possible with the efforts to bring the two German states closer together, and to effect a confederation."

4. Economic Tasks

The resolution sums up the economic tasks facing the German Democratic Republic as follows:

a. To develop the economy in the next few years in such a way that the superiority of the socialist system over the capitalist system is clearly shown. Per capita consumption of foodstuffs and consumer goods must soon exceed per capita consumption in West Germany.

b. The key to such a development must be a speedy development of productivity. This should be done by the proper use of all latest technical developments, by the automation and rationalisation of production, and the strengthening of the socialist consciousness of the workers.

"During the transitional period the contradiction between the socialist economy and capitalist elements of the economy is solved step-by-step by means of the voluntary establishment of production cooperatives . . . and by means of the conversion of private capitalist undertakings into semi-state undertakings. The main method used is the education and the changing of capitalist entrepreneurs into reative workers . . .

5. Ideological Tasks

This section of the resolution stressed the necessity of producing a high degree of socialist consciousness amongst all working people. "Socialist consciousness does not develop amongst the working people by itself, but only when the party of the working class wages a consistent battle to carry the socialist idea into the masses. The method of systematic and patient conviction is the most important method of party work, and demands careful study of the dialectical development in the consciousness of the people . . .

"In the workers' and peasants' state only dialectical materialism can be the dominant ideology, penetrating all spheres of intellectual life — science, education, art and literature.

"It is not a task for the state to spread religious teachings. The exercise of religious cults and the study of the dogmas connected therewith is a private affair of church members, which takes place solely within the framework of the church."

"The main task of the working class and all peace-loving forces in Germany is to prevent the atomic arming of West Germany, and to achieve the establishment of an atom-free zone in Europe. This task can only be mastered if the German working class cooperates in unity of action, and plays a leading role in the people's movement against atomic death. Successful struggle against atomic armaments is the pre-condition for the establishment of a confederation of the two German states, and the reunification of Germany.

"The re-unification of Germany as a peace-loving democratic state demands the maximum strengthening of the German Democratic Republic, which is supported by the Soviet Union and the whole of the socialist camp."

GERMANY & THE MIDDLE EAST

Differing Reactions From The Two German States

The two German states reacted entirely differently to the crisis in the Middle East. While the West German Government made air-fields and other facilities available for the British and American forces intervening in the Middle East, action in Democratic Germany was marked by a wave of protest against the intervention.

Here are details of some of the reactions in Germany to the crisis:

July 16th: Delegates to the Party Congress of the Socialist Unity Party, meeting in East Berlin, unanimously protested against the intervention. The protest resolution stated in part: "This fascist invasion (of American troops in Lebanon) on the part of the imperialists is not only a crude intervention in internal affairs, but also an act of aggression against all the Arab peoples. It is a breach of the Charter of the United Nations and a great threat to peace. We declare our solidarity with the Arab peoples and demand the immediate withdrawal of the troops of intervention".

July 17th: The German Democratic Republic officially recognised the Irak Republic, established on July 14th. Prime Minister Otto Grotewohl telegraphed Abdel Kerim el Kassem, Prime Minister of Irak: "The Government of the German Democratic Republic greets the formation of the Republic of Irak, and is convinced that this step will serve the interests of peace and cooperation between the peoples."

On the same date Prime Minister Otto Grotewohl telegraphed UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjoeld requesting him to use all his influence to obtain the withdrawal of the troops of intervention.

July 18th: In an official statement the Government of the German Democratic Republic announced its complete solidarity with the liberation struggle of the Arab peoples, adding: "The Government will take further steps to support effectively the just struggle of the Arab Peoples". The statement condemned the action of the West German Government in making West German airfields available to the aggressors. "This action reveals the West German Government to be an accomplice in the American aggression, and a bitter enemy of the Arab peoples" the statement said.

In Potsdam several thousand people demonstrated outside the British and American military missions stationed there, and demonstrations of solidarity with the Arab peoples were reported from all parts of the German Democratic Republic.

July 21st: The Government of the German Democratic Republic protested officially to the West German against the support being given in West Germany to the Anglo-American intervention.

The Government of the Democratic Republic called upon the Government of West Germany to take the following steps immediately:

1. To make sure that no West German NATO soldiers should participate in any way in the Anglo-American aggression.

2. To ban the use to the interventionists of air-fields and other military installations in West Germany.

3. To stop British and American planes flying over West Germany on their way to the Middle East.

4. To make punishable any propaganda in press and radio in favour of the intervention.

July 22nd: Prime Minister Grotewohl addressed a telegram of congratulations to President Nasser of the United Arab Republic on the occasion of the sixth anniversary of the national revolution in Egypt. The telegram stated in part: "Especially in these serious and difficult days, in which the peace of the world has been threatened by the Anglo-American intervention in the Near and Middle East, the Government and the people of the German Democratic Republic stand side by side with the Arab peoples in their struggle for national independence ... To our regret we see that the Government of the German Federal Republic is pursuing a policy of support for imperialist aggression. I can assure you that this policy has nothing in common with the interests and wishes of the entire German people."

July 24th: Irak's Premier Abdel Karim Kassim telegraphed Prime Minister Otto Grotewohl, thanking him for his congratulations on the victory of the Iraki people, and adding: "I am convinced that it would be both useful and necessary to strengthen the friendly relations between the Irak Republic and the German Democratic Republic, in order to serve the cause of world peace and to help our mutual interests."

U. S. Airmen Handed Over

The nine US Army men who spent six weeks in the German Democratic Republic after making a forced landing in a helicopter which lost its way on June 7th were handed over to the American Red Cross on the border between East and West Germany on July 19th.

Negotiations for the return of the men had previously broken down because the American government refuses to recognise the existence of the German Democratic Republic. The return of the men was finally negotiated between the official representatives of the Red Cross organisations of both states.

An official statement from the press bureau of the Prime Minister of the German Democratic Republic said: "This arrangement took full cognisance of the reality of the existence of the German Democratic Republic as a sovereign state. The Government of the United States could not avoid recognising the existence of the German Democratic Republic ... The agreement emphasised that agreements reached under the occupation regime are no longer binding for the German Democratic Republic. Occupational privileges can no longer be claimed in the German Democratic Republic. Under the agreement "the American side" agreed to pay the costs, amounting to over 7000 marks, incurred in connection with the stay of the nine Americans in the Democratic Republic.

On their return to West Germany the US Army men said they had been "reasonably well treated" during their stay.

CHURCH-STATE PARLEY

Prime Minister Otto Grotewohl and other government officials have had a series of discussions with Evangelical Church leaders in the German Democratic Republic recently, it was officially announced in East Berlin on July 22nd.

The aim of the discussions, at which the Evangelical Church was represented by Bishop Mitzenheim and Bishop Krummacher, was stated to be "the removal of disruptive factors in the relations between state bodies and the leadership of the Evangelical Church".

"A large part was played in the discussions by the Military Chaplains' Agreement concluded between the Evangelical Church and the (West) German Federal Republic in 1957, and the political and constitutional effects of this agreement" the official announcement said.

"After a long discussion of this subject the Church representatives declared that the Church in the German Democratic Republic was not bound by this agreement, and that it was invalid for the Church in the German Democratic Republic and for its pastors.

"The representatives of the Church in the German Democratic Republic declared that the Church served international peace by its own means, and that therefore it was basically in agreement with the efforts for peace made by the German Democratic Republic and its Government. In accordance with their faith the Christians fulfilled their duties as citizens on the basis of legality. They respect the development towards Socialism, and contribute to the peaceful construction of national life.

"Discussion of the complaints raised by the representatives of the Evangelical Church led to the conclusion that the charge made against the State of infringing the Constitution was not maintained. The Government declared: Every citizen enjoys full liberty of faith and conscience. The undisturbed practice of religion is guarded by the Republic.

"An investigation has been promised of complaints made by the representatives of the Church on the implementation of the order issued by the Minister of Education on February 12th 1958 on the education process in the schools.

"Clarification and dealing with individual questions still open was transferred to the State Secretary for Church Questions ... Both sides declared their readiness to hold discussions for the removal of any defects in the relations between the State and the Church."

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Commenting in favourable terms on the official announcement, the leading West German newspaper "Die Welt" stated on July 24th: "Both sides were seriously interested in reaching a modus vivendi, and they have in fact reached it ... A real compromise has been achieved, and both sides have had to concede a little."

BRITISH DOCTORS CONDEMN RE-INSTATEMENT OF NAZI MEDICOS

The British Medical Association, meeting in Birmingham on July 11th, unanimously condemned the West German authorities for re-instating doctors guilty of medical war crimes.

The resolution asked the council of the Association to bring the association's views "to the notice of those responsible for this cynical affront to the honour, morals and high ideals of the true practice of medicine throughout the world".

In particular the Association protested against the re-instatement of a nazi woman doctor who was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment by a US Court for the crimes she committed whole acting as a "children's doctor" in the nazi concentration camp at Ravensbrueck.

The woman, Herta Oberheuser, was found guilty by a United States court, in Nuremberg on August 20th 1947, of murdering and torturing prisoners in the Ravensbrueck camp. She was released by the U. S. authorities after serving less than one quarter of her sentence.

"Perhaps the most extraordinary aspect of this shameful decision is the German Labour Ministry's recommendation that Dr. Oberheuser should be given preferential treatment in her efforts to establish herself in Stocksee near Hamburg because she is a 'belatedly returned prisoner of war'", wrote the SUNDAY GRAPHIC on June 29th.

As early as August 1956 GERMAN REPORT printed a statement by a victim who survived Dr. Oberheuser's "treatment";

"The room was filled with straw for the new patients, mostly pregnant Gypsies from Auschwitz camp. Oberheuser did everything possible to 'speed-up' the births in the most primitive and horrible fashion. When she was finished we had to clear up the 'remnants' as Oberheuser described it. These 'remnants' consisted of torn little baby bodies and mothers who had bled to death. The room looked like a slaughter-house."

The SUNDAY GRAPHIC has now interviewed some survivors of this type of treatment who now live in England.

Mrs. Kaczmarska told how she was one of 74 young Polish girls in Ravensbrueck who were selected by Dr. Oberheuser for operations on their legs and thighs. Some of the wounds were deliberately infected with tetanus and gas gangrene.

"Mrs. Kaczmarska was lucky. She merely has a livid scar on her leg. Most were not so fortunate. 'My friends died after hours of agony' she said.

"One day, as the survivers lay in bed in the hospital, an eighteen-year-old Ukrainian girl was brought in. In the evening we saw Dr. Oberheuser coming from the operating theatre with another doctor. One of the girls found a key and looked through the window of the operating room. They saw the body of the Ukrainian girl. Lying there without legs, without arms."

"Mrs. Wadyslawa Chrzanowska, now living in Bristol with her husband and two children, told me how Dr. Oberheuser, with three other doctors, operated on about forty people. One of them operated on her for appendicitis, although she had had her appendix out five years before.

"'A rough cotton pad soaked in chloroform was pushed over my face, but I did not become unconscious. I lay there in an agonised haze, feeling every touch as they operated.'"

WORK WHILE YOU LEARN

By Joan Becker

There will be some big changes in general education in East Germany in September, when the new school year starts. The gist of the matter will be to bring theoretical and practical education closer, to give more and earlier technical instruction and to set up more links with practical life in the factories and on the land.

There are two immediate reasons for the changes; the one is that increased mechanisation, automation, peaceful use of atomic energy etc. make it urgently necessary for the rising generation to learn about the principles of these new things as early as possible.

The second reason is especially important in countries developing towards socialism; children here must grow up with an understanding of the importance of work as the basis of human progress; they must learn not to regard education as an end in itself, or simply as a way to get on in the world, but to acquire a socialist attitude to life which will guide them in using new knowledge in a socialist way, and not only for personal advancement.

First attempts at putting education on a more practical footing were made two or three years ago, when workshop instruction was introduced from the fifth school year onwards.

The aim now is for children, during the whole course of their school life, from the very first year up to the end of the tenth year — by 1965 all children will have ten years' general education — not only to get some real knowledge of production processes in factories and on the land, and to be able to link this knowledge with what they find in their textbooks, but also to be able to do simple productive work themselves — learning while they work.

I have been following developments in the central Berlin school which my son and daughter attend, and the arrangements being made there are similar to what other schools are attempting.

Our school has two very active patrons, one from the Ministry of Communications and one from "Secura", a nationally owned firm which makes cash registers, ready reckoners, automatic tills and such things. They have considerable authority in connection with the school and — what is very important — also the disbursal of funds allocated specially for work in their patron school.

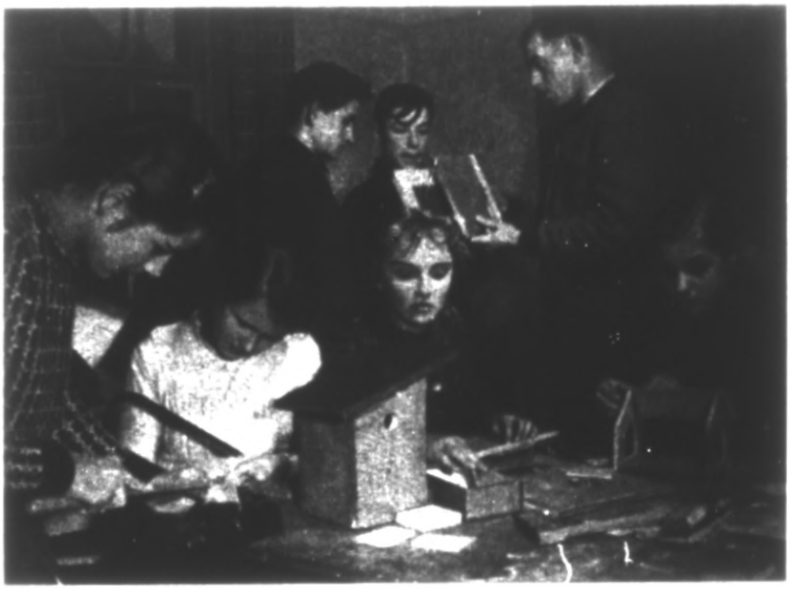
Herr Kalt, of the Ministry of Communications, spent several Sundays driving round the country-side, looking for a suitable place for our "Landschulheim" (country home school) for us; and what he found is ideal for the purpose.

This is actually the summer holiday camp of a big cranebuilding firm where thousands of young people come for camping holidays in June, July and August. For the rest of the year it is unoccupied. The three administrative buildings — offices, clubroom with television set, sick room and staff rooms, a big bathhouse and a large, well-equipped kitchen, can easily accomodate about fifty children.

Girls from an East Berlin high school at work in a radio factory

Here each class in our school will spend about a fortnight in the year, taking ordinary lessons in the morning and helping in simple ways in the near-by agricultural production cooperative in the afternoon.

I visited the Landschulheim with Herr Kalt and some other members of our parents' committee while our first group — of nine year-olds — was there just before Whitsun. It lies in lovely wooded country and the buildings themselves, which are quite simple and may be somewhat cold in winter, although there is a big tiled stove in each room, are surrounded by neglected grounds which the children can very well help to put in order as part of their productive work. The smallest will be required to do ten hours' productive work in the year, in addition to handicrafts and needlework children of thirteen and fourteen will be doing about a hundred hours and middle and high school children will manage about two hundred and fifty hours in the year and have a new school subject, "Basic principles of socialist production."



Boys and girls of the central school at Boritz, near Riesa, make bird-boxes as part of their polytechnical education

In order to fit this in without sacrificing other subjects, the total number of hours in school will actually have to be increased; one hour a week more for the smallest, but in no case more than three hours a week more.

Our nine year-olds in the Landschulheim were not, of course, doing what you would really call "work" — a couple of hours on some afternoons picking stones or weeding the garden. They had visited the agricultural production cooperative, the local machine and tractor station, the village school and the nearby Forestry Research Academy, which has promised to let older children help in the tree nursery next year.

But the main value for younger city children is seen in familiarising them with country life and in linking nature study lessons more closely with nature itself.

School syllabuses will be changed round when necessary, so as to fit in with seasonal work on the land; some sections can be fully dealt with while the children are at the Landschulheim, and other subjects can certainly be made much lively and understandable.

Older children will be expected to do really useful jobs in the agricultural production cooperative — feeding chickens, helping with spring sowing or with the harvest — especially with the potato and sugar beet harvest. Their work will be planned to fit in with their biology and physics lessons and members of the cooperative will be asked to explain definite processes to the children; very important, I should think, because there must be a large number of teachers who know nothing about life on the land, and they will have to learn with the children.

Herr Radtke from "Secura" has also made detailed arrangements for our older children — the thirteen and fourteen year-olds — to spend a day at work in the "Secura" apprentices' school every week. Our present 7th class started this month, going to "work" there every Thursday, and thoroughly enjoying it.

Here it will also be necessary to turn school syllabuses round a little, so as to coordinate theoretical and practical instruction; this will mean close cooperation between school teachers and apprentices' instructors, and here again many teachers will certainly have to learn a great deal if they want to retain their authority with the children.

This way is probably the best for most town schools; but country schools will generally find it easier to do it the other way round — one day of work on the land in the week and then a fortnight every year for senior classes in some industrial enterprise.

The next year or so will certainly bring some difficulties of adjustment for older children; they have been doing a certain amount of handwork and practical work, but it has not been useful enough. They have also visited factories and looked at things from the outside, so to speak, but they will now have to try their hands at some really useful jobs. Beginners are lucky, though, for they will have some years of preliminary practice and will already have acquired some practical skill before they start in on real productive work.

Middle and high school children, many of whom have so far done some voluntary work in factories, mines or on the land, will now all be expected to do real, although simple jobs in industry, and on the land special attention will be paid to mechanised farming. More time will be spent in the machine and tractor stations and they will learn to drive tractors and work with other modern machines.

These new plans have been discussed in teachers' conferences and parents' meetings all over the Republic; some parents as well as teachers have had serious doubts about them and have talked about child labour, the long school day and the danger that less practical education may be neglected.

But I believe if teachers can adjust themselves and coordinate theoretical and practical instruction as far as possible, they should be able to overcome the various problems involved.

CHANGES IN COUNTRY LIFE

By A Correspondent

I have often wondered why the agricultural production co-operatives vary so much in their development. Some get on their feet within a few years and members are soon earning more than individual peasant farmers. They are able to buy pedigree stock, put up new stalls, build new houses and clubs with television sets and other interesting facilities. There are many such co-operatives which have really lifted themselves out of the old rut and can begin to look round and enjoy life.

On the other hand, there are still a number which have not got over the initial difficulties. I visited one of these — in Seefeld, only a couple of hours' drive outside Berlin — and found out at least some of the reasons for its slow start.

Most co-operatives are composed of former small peasants, re-settlers and farm labourers who received land through the Land Reform late in 1945. They generally got together first as Type I co-operatives, ie., farming only their land in common, and then went over to Type III in which stock, grazing and woodland are also farmed cooperatively. The process was thus a gradual one, in which there was time for co-operative consciousness to develop gradually too.

Where a co-operative has been outstandingly successful, even middle and large individual peasants — ie. those who employed outside labour — are coming in too, so that it is really worth while to use the large-scale farming machinery available in the machine and tractor stations; the stations can also work better and more economically over large tracts of land.

A good machine and tractor station also attracts industrial workers from the towns. The government has in the past few years called on industrial workers to go back to the land. Some of those who answered the call were actually former land workers who returned to farming, but many of them were trained mechanics who found a better field of activity in the machine and tractor stations.

But it is perhaps only natural that these gravitated to places where farming was already on its feet again, and there remained pockets where progress was much slower.

Seefeld was one of these. Although the co-operative here farms about seventy per cent of the land belonging to this little community — the average for the whole of the Republic is about thirty per cent — it started off under very difficult conditions.

Every single member, with the exception of the new chairman, is a former land worker who had been employed on one of the seven middle-sized farms whose owners preferred the "golden West" after 1945 to accepting the land reform.

They left their farms practically derelict; ten cows, a couple of pigs and weed-grown fields were all the provisional communal farm had to set up with. Things were not much better when the co-operative was founded in 1953. The new members had no experience in management

and little knowledge of agricultural machinery. They had to start as Type III, too, since they had nothing of their own to bring in to the co-operative.

The government helped with extensive credits and there is a branch of the machine and tractor station in the village. But there is not a single young man in the co-operative; members are nearly all over fifty and half are women.

Seefeld is too near Berlin; young people can travel to work by bus and electric railway every day and they have tended during these difficult years to go where life is easier, or where they can learn another trade. There is also a tremendous demand for young workers in the big new industrial enterprises — power stations, steel and coal combines and so on.

The remaining individual peasants in Seefeld can still earn about three times as much as co-operative members, too.

In such circumstances the chairman of a co-operative has a tremendous job on hand. The first chairman in Seefeld was himself a former farm labourer elected by the co-operative members' meeting. He worked very hard himself, but he simply did not have the knowledge necessary to deal with all these difficulties; he got lost in the maze of accounts, delivery quotas, prices etc, did not know where to apply for help, knew little about machinery. The land was indifferently farmed, stock increased too slowly and little could be done to raise members' standard of living.

So a new start was made last year with an experienced chairman who had already built up a splendid co-operative in Mecklenburg. He has concentrated so far on stock, so as to get a little capital together.

He took us to see the milking cows — now seventy-five in number, the twenty odd fine young bullocks, a couple of thousand chicks in brooders and — the mainstay of the co-operative at present — hundreds of pigs of all ages; sows waiting to farrow, sucking pigs, young pigs just off milk, pigs in the kindergarten and pigs in school — as he laughingly called the two intermediate stages — and a long shed with nearly two hundred in various stages of fattening. These are all well housed and looked after by a young woman who has had two years' training in stock-breeding.

The chicks looked fine; but the chairman told us that the co-operative had had about a thousand, and four hundred laying hens last year and lost money on them. This must also have been due to lack of experience and he will see that it does not happen again.

You could see by the look of the co-operative's office that the members are somehow not used to making things a bit comfortable for themselves. The air was stuffy and the television set — a present from the district government — looked somehow forlorn in the rather dark and dusty club-room next door, with its severe long tables and hard chairs.

Curiously enough, though, I did not get a really pessimistic impression of things in Seefeld — perhaps mainly because of its charming woman mayor.

Frau Hagedorn, a pretty young woman in her early thirties, came to Seefeld in 1953, just after the co-operative was formed. It was she who told us about the initial difficulties and the various special problems. She knows the life history of nearly every one of the eight hundred people living in the village and understands what a lengthy process it is for them the change their ways of thinking and acting.

She is herself a trained teacher and has a small daughter of five, so she has tackled things very much from this angle, paying special attention to the school and building up a model creche and kindergarten during the five years she has been here.

We spent a couple of hours in the school — a junior school for the six to ten year-olds; seniors go by bus to a nearby central school. There are two teachers here, each teaching two classes of nine or ten children each. I was surprised to see how well this goes — one group writing while the other group had its lesson. The teachers assured us that concentration is much better than in large single classes in city schools.

Then we paid a surprise visit to the kindergarten and creche. The house is a former private villa — very pleasant, with garden and verandas on the first and second floor. The creche occupies the four rooms on the second floor — one looking out on the balcony where the babies spend most of their time, play-room and rest-room for the tots, dining-room with low round tables and small chairs, kitchen and wash-rooms.

The three helpers — one a qualified nurse — were all in spotless white overalls and we had to slip on clean white overalls too.

The babies come in early — some of them at six am. when their mothers go off to work — and the last of them are fetched at six in the evening. They get their breakfast, noon meal and an afternoon snack while there, all prepared in the spotless little kitchen, for no more than their mothers would have to spend if they remained at home.

Frau Hagedorn could tell us about the families of all these babies and of the children in the kindergarten as well. We went downstairs and saw the tiled kindergarten kitchen and bath and wash-rooms, with twelve low wash-basins, shower and tub baths and electric water heater, where the children all get their Friday baths, since there are no such facilities in their homes.

There is one trained kindergarten teacher with three helpers here, for about thirty children all the year round and considerably more during the busy summer months. She invited us to lunch with the children — guest price 50 pfennigs, 15 pfennigs for the children — and this was a very pleasant surprise.

I never saw a meal for thirty children run more smoothly. The children set the tables and handed round the apple mousse for dessert before the main dish arrived from the kitchen — mashed potatoes with bacon and scrambled egg — and the scrambled egg arrived piping hot from the kitchen only when the potatoes had been served. A small point, this, but it made all the difference.

An after-school club will be opened in a side wing of the same house in September, where nearly all the junior school children will have their lunch and do their homework.

All these things contribute to bringing town and country nearer together. On the one hand children are much better looked after during pre-school and school years, and on the other hand such facilities are an encouragement to town workers to come and work on the land. These children will also have a real feeling of love for their home village and will not be in such a hurry to leave it.

As we walked down the tree-lined village street it was clear that building will have to start soon if more families are to settle down here, but the gardens looked lovely and Frau Hagedorn told us that practically everybody takes part in the annual garden competition here.

The big new general store — a Konsum, retail co-operative society store — is a sign of things to come. Here you can buy everything from cheese to a motor scooter. I particularly admired the big glass-fronted refrigerator with appetising joints of meat on display and the attractive tubular lighting.

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

The motto of the British Broadcasting Corporation, if I remember rightly, is "Nation Shall Speak Peace Unto Nation": and a very fine slogan it is.

But apparently the slogan does not apply to all sections of the work of the Corporation, and in particular not to the special programmes broadcast daily from London in German and addressed to the "Soviet Zone", by which apparently the German Democratic Republic is meant.

Now there would be no particular reason to deal with these broadcasts if they followed the usual pattern of the foreign language broadcasts put out today by nations all over the world; the usual pattern is made up of news bulletins giving more or less stress to the point of view of the country originating the programme, reviews of the press, commentaries on local life and work, and so on.

But the programmes for the "Soviet Zone" broadcast from London, and paid for by the British tax payer, devote little time to this sort of routine job. A very large part of the programme time, and on some days the whole of the time, is given over to what I can only describe as "massive interference" in the internal affairs of the German Democratic Republic.

But before I get round to that aspect of the problem, let me just give you an idea of how this BBC programme handles world affairs. On June 12th, for instance, a commentator on the programme had the thankless job of explaining why in South Rhodesia, with an overwhelmingly Negro population, only a minute proportion of the Negroes could vote in the recent elections.

He explained that it was because the Africans were "primitive, barbarous and wild" and that although the British colonists had blessed the country with railways, hospitals and schools, the primitive Africans could not take part in "complicated modern culture.".

But to get back to internal German affairs. First of all I should like to draw attention to the general tone of the transmissions. On June 17th, for instance, Mr Lindley Fraser, who is in charge of all German-language broadcasts for the BBC, referred to the Government of the German Democratic Republic as a "contemptible gang" (verächtliche Rotte), and on June 6th the administration of the Republic was stated to be composed of "idlers and unscrupulous blackguards". Both these phrases are remarkably reminiscent of the tone of nazi broadcasts during the war.

But apart from such vulgar slanging, the programmes are full of direct and easily nailable lies, which can only be intended to undermine the established government of the German Democratic Republic.

Let me just quote one instance. Recently food rationing in the Democratic Republic was abolished, and simultaneously some food prices were increased. Wages and pensions were adjusted to make up for the price changes, and a short study of the figures will show anyone interested that old age pensioners, for instance, can buy just as much food as they did before the abolition of rationing.

Despite this, the BBC on June 20th quoted with obvious approval a "listener's letter" stating: "Now that ration cards have been abolished, old age pensioners will have to go begging. or they will die".

This special BBC German-language service makes a big play with such "listener's letters", particulary in order to encourage some undefined "resistance movement" in the Democratic Republic. To make this point clear, let me quote a passage from the programme transmitted on June 20th:

"Two listeners have given in their letters advice in the question of resistance against the Soviet Zone regime ... From London we cannot give you any advice on what you should do. Only you, in the Zone, can really decide what form of resistance is possible, and what sort of resistance you can take upon yourselves. With that explanation I have defined our attitude to the following letter, signed with the pseudonym 'Red Corn-Cob':

'Every decent German has the unavoidable duty of practising passive resistance against the East Zonal slave drivers ... The picture must be created that on the one side there are the Un-German Bolshevik gang, and on the other side the German population longing for liberty ...'

"As I already said, dear listeners, we can give you no advice on the possibly fateful decision whether you should practice any form of resistance. This is a personal question of your conscience."

It seems to me to be about time that some members of parliament got busy investigating who is responsible for this flagrant interference by the BBC in the internal affairs of a sovereign state.

* *

Here are a couple of little marginal notes on the degree of renazification in West Germany today.

First exhibit is a small ad in the columns of a little local paper in West Germany, the "Ladenburger Zeitung". I think it is worth quoting in full:

"Declaration!

"I hereby assure the honoured clients of my cinema that I am, contrary to the allegation of Frau Haeffner, of the Capital Cinema in Ladenburg, neither Jewish nor related to Jews. I hereby warn anyone who spreads such remarks about me that I shall take legal proceedings against them. Josef Plachek, Schloss Cinema, Ladenburg."

The only comment I have on this unpleasant advertisment is that Herr Plachek uses the term "juedisch versippt" meaning roughly "related to Jews". This term is entirely and solely part of the nazi racial hatred vocabulary, and no decent German would think of using it.

My second quotation comes from the West German news magazine "Spiegel" of June 25th. The magazine quotes West German Transport Minister Hans-Christoph Seebohm as saying this at a youth rally:

"Do we not see that madness is pressing in on us from the East; do we not see that even in the animal world this dangerous collapse is announcing itself? Do we not see that the wolf, an animal which our naturalists tell us flees from lands of culture, that ravaging wolves are already flooding across East Germany, and that they are getting ready to sweep across the Elbe and penetrate our territories."

In his excitement about his abominable snow-wolves, Minister Seebohm seems to have lost the thread of his argument. If the wolf flees from lands of culture; and if the wolf is now apparently fleeing from the Soviet Union and Poland, and clamouring to get into West Germany, then it is easy to conclude which countries the wolf regards as lands of culture.

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